

INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION
1313 EAST 60TH STREET - CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

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ISSUING ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS

What are administrative regulations, what should be included in such regulations, how should they be prepared, and what kinds of subjects are commonly covered?

Administrative regulations establish and interpret activities and procedures not covered in municipal ordinances. They generally govern employee activities, working conditions, purchasing procedures, and other matters which do not require formal authorization from the city council. Administrative regulations, therefore, are for instructional and information purposes aimed at guiding and facilitating management. Some suggestions on preparing and using administrative regulations are:

1. The chief administrator generally should not issue administrative regulations without prior discussion with the heads of the departments affected. It is desirable to draw upon the practical experience of the employees in operating units before issuing a regulation on a given matter. In this way, department heads and employees will feel that their points of view are represented, and they will more readily accept them. Administrative regulations might well result from training conferences for administrative personnel.
2. Ordinarily the city manager should not usurp the authority of his department heads if he wishes them to have the respect and confidence of their employees. Regulations that are applicable to only one department usually should be issued by the head of that department (for example, police department regulations, MIS Report No. 7).
3. Regulations should govern matters which are relatively permanent. To state this conversely, regulations should not be issued for temporary matters that can be handled better by simple memoranda or oral instructions. For example, there is no need for a regulation telling employees they will have a half day off for a city parade. This can be done simply by posting a notice on bulletin boards or sending a memorandum to department heads. Likewise the administrator cannot and should not hope to control all activities in detail. Certain things should be left to the judgment and experience of department heads.
4. Regulations should be issued sufficiently in advance of the effective date to allow department heads and employees to raise questions concerning the meaning or interpretation of the regulations.
5. Regulations issued to "All Department Heads and Employees of the City" should be few if they are to be read, let alone understood and followed. Regulations for all employees governing conditions of work, grievances, training and so forth should be covered informally in an employee manual. In other words, regulations usually should be directed at department heads and supervisors, and the parts of regulations of general interest to all employees should be incorporated in an employee manual.

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6. Administrative regulations should be clear, concise, and consistent with other regulations that have been issued. Any single regulation should be so organized that it follows a logical and systematic plan under which related subjects are brought together. Descriptive subheadings within each regulation make it easier to locate the desired material. The use of a separate paragraph for each idea contributes to ease of reading.

7. Regulations should be issued in loose-leaf form with a subject matter index if they are to serve their purpose as guides that are easy to use. Each written regulation should specify by titles and date any previous documents which it amends and restate them fully as amended instead of giving only the amended sections. The amendment may be indicated by underlining the new provisions. A system for numbering, indexing, and filing the regulations should be developed. Every regulation should indicate the effective date.

8. The enforcement of general and departmental regulations is a task for the manager and of the department heads. Regulations on internal administration should be distributed to all departments and offices for posting on bulletin boards or other regularly designated places and for filing.

General administrative regulations may cover a wide variety of matters that have to do with more than one department. The table of contents of the regulations issued by the manager of one of the larger cities, as reproduced below, indicates the scope of subject matter covered.

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Petty Cash and Change Funds
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Requests for Ordinances
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Chapter V - Use of City Buildings and Property

City Hall Offices
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Chapter VI - Use of Motor Vehicles on City Business

City Owned Motor Vehicles
Permission to Keep City Owned Motor Cars Out of City Garage at Night
Cost Records on City Owned Motor Vehicles
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Utility Damage Claims Against City
Reporting of Motor Vehicle Accidents
Regulations Governing Compensation for Injuries and Deaths in Line of Duty

Typical Regulations. Some of the shorter administrative regulations that have been issued by the city managers of several cities are reproduced below to show more specifically how selected subjects are handled. Regulations on some subjects as, for example, one dealing with payroll procedure, may be eight or more pages long.

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EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCES

The policy of the city is to attempt to anticipate grievances as soon as they arise so as to give employees an opportunity to discuss their grievances with supervisors in whom they have confidence and to find satisfactory solutions as rapidly as possible.

When a supervisor becomes aware of a grievance that has developed he shall immediately talk to the employee to obtain his point of view and to inform him of all relevant considerations. If the supervisor believes the employee is justified in his views, he shall take immediate corrective action to the extent of his authority. In case the supervisor lacks authority for corrective action or fails to find a satisfactory solution, the next higher ranking supervisor shall be promptly notified, and responsibility for satisfactory resolution of the grievance shall pass through regular administrative channels until the situation has been satisfactorily disposed of.

If review of a grievance by this method fails to produce an acceptable solution, the employee may refer his grievance to the personnel director either in writing or by appearing at the personnel office in person. At that point grievance procedures follow those outlined in the city's personnel rules. In any event primary responsibility for employee grievances rests with immediate supervisors and department heads, and supervisors shall make every effort to handle grievances before they reach the state of being referred to the personnel director.

LETTERS FROM COUNCILMEN

Whenever a department or division head receives a letter from a member of the city council, he shall immediately acknowledge receipt of the letter, sending copy of such acknowledgment to the manager's office. Copies of all subsequent reports to the councilmen shall also be sent to the manager's office. It is most important that communications from councilmen be given prompt attention, and when they involve matters which require an extended period of time before final disposal, interim reports shall be made to the councilman so that at all times he will be informed as to the status of the situation.

If the request involves the expenditure of funds not included in the departmental budget, the fact shall be stated in the reply, following which the manager's office will present the problem to the council for consideration.

ATTENDANCE AT CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE HEARINGS

The purpose of this regulation is to provide a means whereby council committees can be informed concerning pending ordinances. A copy of a form, "Notice of Council Action," will be sent to various department heads from time to time to inform them of pending legislation which may be before a council committee. The department head or some other responsible member of the department familiar with the proposed ordinance should be informed on all facts contained in the ordinance and be prepared to appear before the council committee named on the date specified. Department heads or their representatives are requested to hold themselves in readiness on the afternoon scheduled for the hearing, but not to appear before the committee unless called at the request of the chairman or a committee member or by the manager.

PROCEDURE THROUGH ESTABLISHED CHANNELS

Contacts with the City Manager. In the normal course of business, contacts of city employees with the city manager shall be through or with the knowledge of the department head.

Absence of Department Heads. In case of absence, the department head shall designate some person in his department to sign official documents for him. In each case the department head shall give written authorization to such person to sign (by rubber stamp, or otherwise) the name of the department head by the name and title of the person authorized to sign for him, and the inclusive dates of such authorization. A copy of such authorization bearing the signature of the person authorized to sign for the department head shall be furnished the city manager, the director of finance, and the director of personnel.

REQUESTS FOR ORDINANCES

Form to be Used. All requests for ordinances from city departments shall be submitted to the city manager on form No. 1 (copy of form available on request to MIS).

Method of Filling Out Form. (a) In space indicated show the name of the director of the department or the name of the citizen requesting the preparation of the ordinance. In the case of requests made to city officials by citizens, show the name of the citizen, followed in parentheses by the name of the director of the department to whom the request was made. (b) In the space provided for descriptive matter, furnish all factual information needed by the city attorney's office to prepare the requested ordinance. In addition, for departmental requests, outline the need for the proposed ordinance and furnish such other information as will help in determining whether to submit the request for legal drafting. This latter information shall be appropriately distinguished from the factual information necessary for the drafting of the ordinance. (c) In the space provided relating to the desired effective date, insert such date after taking into consideration the fact that three meetings are normally required for the passage of an ordinance and that all but emergency measures may require an additional ten or more days before going into effect.

Approvals. Requests for ordinances which will require certification by the director of finance as to the availability of funds shall be approved by the director of finance in the space provided before being transmitted to the city manager's office. The city attorney shall not prepare any ordinance requested directly or indirectly by any department except upon receipt of a request form signed by the city manager.

FILING CONTRACTS, LEASES AND OTHER AGREEMENTS

Copies Required. A signed copy of any contract, lease, or other agreement to which the city is a party must be filed in the office of the city clerk immediately upon its execution. The sole exception to this regulation is for contracts made by the director of finance for the purchase of supplies, materials, and equipment.

City Clerk's File. The city clerk shall receive, file, record, and index all such contracts, leases, and agreements as part of the official records of the city.

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Approving Ordinances Must Have Contract Attached. No ordinances proposing to approve any such contract, lease, or agreement shall be introduced for consideration by the city council unless a copy of the contract, lease, or agreement is attached to and made a part of the ordinance.

APPROVAL OF FORM LETTERS AND OTHER PRINTED MATTER

Form Letters to be Approved by City Manager. Copy for all form letters, circulars, notices, requests for payment, or any other form of typed or printed matter for public distribution with the approval of the department head, shall be submitted to the city manager's office for approval before it is duplicated or printed.

Other Printed Matter to be Approved by Department Head and City Manager. All requisitions for forms or other printed or duplicated matter shall bear the approval not only of the division head but also that of the department head. In each case the department head shall check the requisition as to quantity and shall check the copy as to content, size, format, paper stock, typography and general make-up. All such requisitions and copy shall be submitted by the purchasing agent to the city manager for approval.

Reference to City Ordinances. In case the copy contains reference to a city ordinance, the department head shall be responsible for correctness of the reference to the proper section of the latest revision of the ordinances.

CITY OFFICES

Purpose. To protect city property, to promote economy in operation, to facilitate janitorial operations, and to promote good appearance in all city offices and buildings, the following regulation is prescribed:

Conservation Measures to be Taken. The head of each department or office shall immediately take such steps to insure that the following conditions are complied with:

- a. All lights in each office shall be turned off when not in use, especially at the close of each day's business.
- b. All windows shall be closed at the end of each day's work.
- c. All doors leading to the lobby, halls, or other places of public access shall be closed and locked at the close of each working day.
- d. All offices, buildings, and other premises, shall be put in a clean, neat, and orderly condition and a check shall be made at periodic intervals to assure their being kept in this condition.

Place Valuables in Safe. Each city employee collecting cash or other negotiable paper shall see to it that such property is deposited where it will be securely locked at the end of each day. Employees will be held personally responsible for any losses resulting from the failure adequately to protect city property placed in their care.

Report Violations. The superintendent of building maintenance and those in charge of other city properties are instructed to see that all violations of the above provisions found by his employees shall be immediately reported

to the manager's office, and in the case of loss of cash or valuables to both the manager's office and to the director of finance.

SPACE ASSIGNMENT - CITY HALL

Purpose. To use city hall office space most effectively and to insure that conflicting plans will not be made for the use of such space, it is necessary that all departments adhere to the following procedure.

Changes Requiring Approval of City Manager. In all cases in which a department head desires to move an activity to a space formerly vacant or used by another department, prior approval of the city manager must be secured. Internal office changes within a single department will not require special approval other than financing any costs of construction or alteration. The approval of the city manager is required however for internal rearranging that will change the location where business with the public is transacted.

Procedure for Obtaining Approval. A memorandum outlining the space requested, space to be vacated, reason for requesting the change, and the estimated cost of building alterations, telephone installations, new equipment and other expenses shall be sent to the city manager who will indicate his approval or disapproval by a reply memorandum.

Responsibility of the Director of Public Works. The director of public works shall be responsible for compliance with this regulation. No building alterations, or moving of furniture and equipment to previously unoccupied space, shall be started until authorized by the city manager.

Scale Layout of Office Space. It is suggested that before any office is relocated, a scale floor plan showing the location of all furniture, equipment, walls, partitions, windows and doors be prepared. This technique has been used extensively by most large corporations and is very useful in planning office arrangement. The research and budget department has 1/4" scale templates for standard office furniture such as desks, files, chairs, etc. that may be used for this purpose. The staff of that department will assist with plans for space arrangement and use upon request to the director.

City Hall Floor Plans. The director of public works shall prepare 1/4" scale floor plans of all usable office space in the city hall. One set of these plans will be maintained by the building manager showing the current use and assignment of all offices. Additional copies shall be made available to city departments.

INDIVIDUAL NAMES ON STATIONERY AND DOORS

Purpose. In the interest of economy, the names of department or division heads reporting to the city manager will no longer be painted on doors or signs. Such painting instead will be limited to the title of the position. For the same reason, the names of individuals will not be printed on stationery or office forms ordered in the future.

Names Now on Stationery and Doors. Department or division heads whose names now are painted on doors or signs may use their judgment as to whether such names shall be continued on display, and all office stationery or forms now bearing the names of individuals will be continued in use until the supply is exhausted.

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SOLICITATION BY OR OF CITY EMPLOYEES DURING WORKING HOURS

Unless authorized by the city council or approved by the city manager all solicitations among city employees during working hours for charitable or any other purpose or purposes, and all selling of tickets, magazines, or merchandise of any kind are hereby prohibited. This restriction applies to all solicitations, selling or peddling of every nature whether by city employees or anyone else.

SIGNING OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

1. Charter and Code References. The charter states that "The city manager and any other officer, or officers, are hereby authorized to exercise and perform any of their powers or duties through any of their respective subordinates." The Administrative Code reads in part as follows:...."When any person so designated to perform the duties of an officer who is absent or unable to perform all of his duties....is required to sign any official document pertaining to such office, it shall be signed in his name by the so designated subordinate."

2. Need for Amplification. Despite the above Charter and Administrative Code provisions, a lack of uniformity prevails among the city departments with respect to the signing of letters and documents by administrative personnel for department and division heads. In order to secure uniformity, and in compliance with the law quoted above, the following regulations are established with respect to the signing of documents by subordinates, the responsibility for which is fixed by ordinance or other regulations on department heads.

3. List of Authorized Signers. Each department head shall prepare a list of documents such as purchase orders, reservation of funds, personnel requisitions, contracts, time sheets, and ordinance requests for which he wishes to delegate authority to sign to a subordinate. Opposite each such document listed shall be shown the name or names, titles and signatures of individuals authorized to sign the document in the name of the department head. In the designation of those authorized to sign for the department head, it shall be stated by such department head when and under what circumstances the subordinate shall have power to sign for him. In case of the absence or disability of the department head, due notification of such fact must be given to the officials hereinafter named. Copies of the list of documents and those designated to sign them shall be sent to these officials, as follows: city manager, city clerk, city auditor, city counselor, finance director, and personnel director.

4. Manner of Signing. In all cases in which a subordinate signs for his department head it shall be done in the manner shown below. The subordinate shall sign his name in full in the same manner as shown on the list required in No. 3 above. Rubber stamps may be used for all except the signature portion.

Sample Method of Signing:

REED MCKINLEY, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

By Richard Dreher
Administrative Assistant

Note: See also MIS Report No. 57 entitled "Use of Written Procedures as a Management Tool," October, 1948.